

EDUCATION

Harvard and Beyond: The University Under Siege

IT finally happened to Harvard, too. In a sequence of confrontations that has now become a deplorable custom on American campuses, a small band of student rebels seized an administration building to protest university policies and to deliberately provoke a crisis. Police were then summoned to oust the intruders; moderate students, angered at both the fact of the "bust" and what they felt was police brutality, were radicalized into organizing a strike. The three-day boycott of classes was the first in the modern history of a venerable institution that prides itself on its devotion to learning and the rational resolution of differences. It was a shock—to faculty, students and administration alike—that for a time the "Harvard way" had failed. No matter how soon the present crisis is resolved, the great temple of learning on the Charles will never be quite the same.

The conflict began at noon on Wednesday. About 250 students from Harvard and Radcliffe, most of them members of Students for a Democratic Society and the pro-Mao Progressive Labor Party, appeared outside University Hall, the three-story administration building at the center of Harvard Yard. They reiterated six "unnegotiable" demands made on the Harvard Corporation.* The issues: the abolition of ROTC and an end to what the radicals

* A governing body that is responsible for most policy decisions. It consists of the president of the university, the treasurer and five fellows, who elect their own successors.

consider Harvard's "expansionist" approach to its urban surroundings.

Chanting "Fight! Fight!", the students marched into the hall, which contains the offices of the Harvard deans, though not the university president's. When one of the five deans asked the students to leave, he was jeered and shouted down. The rebels then forcibly evicted the deans and their assistants. They locked themselves inside the building, securing the doors with red bicycle chains, and proceeded to hold meetings to discuss further strategy. "The Corporation," their proclamation grandly noted, "can issue a statement when it gives in."

Locking Up a Lock-In

Initially there was widespread disapproval of their tactics: seizing a building is simply not the Harvard way. Two students in the crowd outside University Hall even burned S.D.S. in effigy, and there were cheers when Franklin L. Ford, Harvard's ranking academic dean, announced through a bullhorn that the gates of Harvard would be shut at 4:30 p.m., thus locking up the lock-in. Ford also warned the radicals to vacate the premises within 15

minutes or face charges of criminal trespass. The radicals sat tight.

The radicals were also unmoved by a seething answer to their demands from President Nathan M. Pusey. They had charged that the university planned to tear down Negro slums in Roxbury to make room for the expanding Harvard Medical School, and that members of the Corporation had illegitimate vested interests in preserving ROTC on campus: "These businessmen want Harvard to continue producing officers for the Viet Nam war or for use against black rebellions at home for political reasons." Pusey flatly denied that the university planned to destroy the housing. He also noted that Harvard had recently taken account of student objections by stripping ROTC of course credit, but was prevented from abolishing it entirely by "contractual obligations" to the Government. He began his statement by challenging the rebels' sincerity: "Can anyone believe the Harvard S.D.S. demands are made seriously?" He ended it on the same note: "How can one respond to allegations which have no basis in fact?"

Within 30 minutes after the seizure, Pusey began a six-hour round of conferences with his deans, his administrative board and the masters of the nine Harvard houses at the presidential residence, 17 Quincy Street. "It was all very informal," said one participant in the talks. "Very simply, he sought advice, and we gave it."

Letters about the CIA

In essence, Pusey had three options before him. One was to send in the police; a second was to try to negotiate with the intruders in hopes that they would abandon the building; a third was to seek resolutions from the faculty condemning the occupation, thereby encouraging the student majority to coalesce and isolating the radicals. Against substantial opposition from his advisers, Pusey eventually decided to use force. A major factor in his decision was the legitimate fear that the radicals might rifle the university's confidential files. Friday morning, in fact, the Boston underground newspaper *Old Mole* printed seven Harvard documents that had obviously been discovered by the invaders. (see box page 55).

Shortly before dawn on Thursday, 400 policemen entered the Yard. About half were state troopers; the rest were drawn from the constabularies of Cambridge, Boston and other parts of the metropolitan area. Facing them on the south steps of University Hall were about 120 students, with wet pieces of



PUSEY EN ROUTE TO FACULTY MEETING
More guide than commander.

lege gave the radicals one last chance. "You have five minutes to vacate the building," he announced over the bullhorn, but his words were drowned out by students chanting in unison "Pusey must go; ROTC must go!"

The troopers charged. In less than a minute, the students were pushed and shoved, punched and clubbed, and driven from the steps. Then, after unlimbering sledgehammers, chain cutters and a 4-ft.-long iron battering ram, the troopers forced their way into the building. Screams of anger and pain were heard inside. The troopers began removing the protesters, dragging some away by their long hair and butting others with billy clubs. By 5:30 a.m., a mere 25 minutes after they made the initial charge, the police had cleared the building. In all, 184 persons were arrested on charges of criminal trespass; 45 were injured seriously enough to be treated at hospitals. Four more were hospitalized: a Harvard student, a policeman and two women outsiders, one with a broken back and the other with a broken ankle.

The radicals' seizure of University Hall and their implacable demands were deliberate attempts to disrupt the good order of the university; the tactics succeeded beyond the fondest dreams of their perpetrators. Even moderate students who agreed with Pusey about the demands of the radicals were shocked that he had called in the police at all. At midday Thursday, 1,500 students assembled in Memorial Church for a heated four-hour discussion. Calling for Pusey's resignation if he refused to accept their demands, the moderates passed a resolution that students, faculty and administrators besides the president be given voting seats on the